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House of Representatives

The House met at 10 a.m. and was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore [Mr. EMERSON].

DESIGNATION OF THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore laid before the House the following communication from the Speaker:

WASHINGTON, DC,
July 20, 1995.

I hereby designate the Honorable BILL EMERSON to act as Speaker pro tempore on this day.

NEWT GINGRICH,
Speaker of the House of Representatives.

PRAYER

The Reverend Dr. William Hobbs, Spring Glen Church, Hamden, CT, offered the following prayer:

Sovereign God, holy and gracious, be known in this Chamber where men and women wield authority with far-reaching implications. Make these servants who were clever enough to get elected wise enough to serve the public good, and both fair and compassionate enough to address the needs of all the people, placing people above politics, regarding them as neighbors to be served and joined in service.

Protect them from the terrible temptation of the love of power so they may know the power of love. Let them see across these aisles not enemies to be ridiculed and defeated, but compatriots to join in common enemies of poverty, fear, insecurity, and injustice.

So let Your reign of peace with justice find support here and everywhere, most gracious and almighty God. Amen.

THE JOURNAL

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair has examined the Journal of the

last day's proceedings and announces to the House his approval thereof.

Pursuant to clause 1, rule I, the Journal stands approved.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The SPEAKER. Will the gentleman from Kansas [Mr. TIAHRT] come forward and lead the House in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Mr. TIAHRT led the Pledge of Allegiance as follows:

I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

A WARM WELCOME FOR REV. BILL HOBBS

(Ms. DELAURO asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. DELAURO. Mr. Speaker, it brings me great pleasure to welcome here this morning the Reverend Bill Hobbs, my constituent, to the House of Representatives, to the people's House.

Reverend Hobbs indeed serves the people. He is from Hamden, CT, where he presides over the community's largest Protestant congregation at the Spring Glen Church.

Since arriving in 1984, Reverend Hobbs has led his congregation in countless community service efforts. Among their many projects are the food and fuel bank programs. These are critical efforts. The Spring Glen Church has willingly accepted the responsibility of feeding its community's hungry. This, along with helping to provide heat to low-income households during the cold Connecticut winters, is a testament to the congregation's commitment to those in need.

The church is a valuable community resource. It has opened its doors to several civic and community organiza-

tions in need of its support. The congregation generously provides to these groups whatever it can. Reverend Hobbs and his congregation help to bridge a critical gap to those who do not qualify for State and Federal aid, and yet still require assistance.

I salute the generous efforts of Reverend Hobbs and Hamden's Spring Glen Church for their selfless service to the community. I thank them for their continuing commitment to these ongoing efforts.

It is our distinct pleasure to have the Reverend Hobbs with us today, and we thank you, Reverend Hobbs, for joining with us today and for your blessing.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair announces that 1-minutes will be limited to 20 today, 10 to each side.

THE NATIONAL DIALOG ON MEDICARE

(Mr. BARTLETT of Maryland asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. BARTLETT of Maryland. Mr. Speaker, it has been several weeks now since the Board of Trustees of Medicare issued their report saying that by 2002 Medicare will be broke. We are now engaged in a national dialog on this subject. And where have we come in this dialog?

I think that the little plate here shows it very well. Are we talking about Medicare, or are we talking about MediScare. The last thing this country needs, Mr. Speaker, is all of the half-truths and untruths that are issuing from the other side of the aisle, that are meant to frighten our senior citizens.

□ This symbol represents the time of day during the House proceedings, e.g., □ 1407 is 2:07 p.m.

Matter set in this typeface indicates words inserted or appended, rather than spoken, by a Member of the House on the floor.



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What we need is a considered debate on this subject. Apparently my colleagues on the other side of the aisle are content to maintain the status quo by these scare tactics, and let Medicare go bankrupt.

Mr. Speaker, the Republican majority will not let this happen. We are committed to preserving, protecting, and strengthening Medicare for this generation and future generations.

ARBITRARY CUTS IN MEDICARE ARE IMPRUDENT

(Mr. DOYLE asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. DOYLE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to speak on behalf of our communities, hospitals, and the health of today's and tomorrow's senior citizens. If we are to bring about Medicare reform which will prove to be truly beneficial, we must first reach a consensus that reforms must achieve specified goals without creating new, more difficult problems.

In the Pittsburgh area alone, there are seven hospitals which would face almost certain shutdown as a result of these proposed cuts. It is neither prudent nor logical to make devastating cuts to Medicare in such an arbitrary fashion. The sound-thinking, hard-working people of western Pennsylvania and across this country will tell you that putting the cart before the horse will get Medicare nowhere fast.

A recent national poll shows that 72 percent of the American public oppose Medicare cuts being made to pay for tax breaks. One has to question how making major cuts to Medicare in part to fund tax breaks could be construed by anyone as fiscally conservative.

I urge my colleagues to oppose these ill-conceived and reckless cuts which not only shake the current foundation, but cause irreparable damage to the future stability of the Medicare system.

ACT NOW TO SAVE MEDICARE, NOT LATER

(Mr. TIAHRT asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. TIAHRT. Mr. Speaker, the liberals are continuing their scare campaign against the seniors of our country, telling them that Republicans are going to take away their Medicare benefits. In fact, Mr. Speaker, the liberals sound like they want to change the name from Medicare to MediScare.

But I would like to tell you something: I like Medicare, I like providing seniors with crucial medical security. And let me tell you what else I like. I like the idea of Medicare lasting a long, long time, so that future generations will also enjoy medical security.

But the President's Board of Trustees on Medicare tells us the system is going bankrupt in 7 years. Unless we act now, the future looks bleak.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to tell my liberal colleagues, let us forget the MediScare tactics. Let us channel our energy into something productive. Work with us to save Medicare, and please stop scaring our senior Americans.

WE NEED SPECIFICS ON CHANGES IN MEDICARE

(Mr. DOGGETT asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. DOGGETT. Mr. Speaker, I believe it was old Will Rogers who said all I know is what I read in the papers, and were he around today, he would have a great deal in common with the seniors and the people who care about seniors, who are concerned about Medicare.

Because you see, all that our Republican colleagues have had to say about their specific plan to change and alter and reform and refine Medicare is that they think that ought to be done. If American seniors or Will Rogers were to have read the Times on Monday, they would have learned one of the specifics of this particular secret plan, that the Republicans think that Medicare beneficiaries should be discouraged from buying insurance to cover what Medicare does not cover already.

The Republicans evidently believe that MediGap coverage insulates patients from the cost of care; in essence, that our seniors are not paying enough for the care that they receive today.

We have had two Members this morning come up and talk about Medicare. They have failed to outline one specific change. They should be talking about MediScare, because they are scared to death to tell the American people how they are going to increase the cost of Medicare to every senior in this land.

DURBIN HARASS-THE-TOBACCO-FARMER AMENDMENT

(Mr. CHAMBLISS asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. CHAMBLISS. Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to oppose what I call the Durbin harass-the-tobacco-farmer amendment to the Agriculture appropriations bill. Having lived in Georgia's farm belt all my adult life, I understand farm programs. Representing the 10th largest tobacco producing district in the country, I understand the importance of the tobacco program to family farmers in my State and across this country.

Now there is a big difference between improving farm programs and harassing farm families. The Durbin amendment is clearly downright harassment of tobacco farm families.

It does not improve the program, it strangles the farmers who participate. For example, if the Durbin amendment passes, the farmer would not have in-

formation on the safest use of chemicals and he would not benefit from his required participation in the crop insurance program.

But the Durbin amendment goes farther. In fact, it would not just affect the farmer, it would affect us all. This provision has the potential to prevent a buy-out of the program which could cost the taxpayers of this country an unbelievable \$1 billion.

If you do not want to throw a blindsided knockout punch to family farmers and to rural districts of America then I urge you to vote "no" on the Durbin amendment.

MEDICARE CUTS TO FUND TAX BREAKS

(Mrs. SCHROEDER asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Mrs. SCHROEDER. Mr. Speaker, indeed there is a MediScare, and there is a MediScare because the seniors know the truth about what is happening. They know that the new Republican majority has found this little piggy bank, this little piggy bank that had "Medicare Trust Fund" written on it, and they have crossed out "Trust Fund" and they are not using the Medicare piggy bank to pay for the crown jewel of their contract.

What is the crown jewel of their contract? Tax breaks for people who make over \$350,000 a year. Seniors think that is unfair, when they also hear that Medicare is going broke. Let me tell you how much faster it is going to go broke if you keep using it as a piggy bank to pay for tax cuts.

When you look at the Medicare tax cut and you look at what it is going to cost to give everybody who makes more than \$350,000 a year a \$20,000 a year per person tax cut, it almost looks identical.

That is why there is MediScare, and they ought to absolutely be believing there is a MediScare. We ought to stop it.

TAX CUTS AND TAX INCREASES HAVE NO IMPACT ON MEDICARE TRUST FUND

(Mr. HOKE asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. HOKE. Mr. Speaker, I think that the Members on the other side of the aisle do not understand how Medicare is funded. It is funded by a 1.45-percent payroll tax that is levied on employees and matched by employers, and if that tax is not paid, it will not be funded at all. It does not come from the general revenues of the Federal Government, it comes from a trust fund.

It does not matter if we raise one penny of taxes other than the 1.45 percent. It does not matter if we raise those or if we cut them. It has no impact whatsoever. The trust fund will go bankrupt completely in 7 years, regardless of what we do with those taxes. So